



# Independent Electrical Contractors of New England, Inc.



TO: The Honorable Paul Doyle and Rep. Joseph Taborsak  
Members of the General Law Committee

FROM: Lisa Stevens, Executive Director

DATE: February 22, 2011

RE: **HB-5021, AN ACT CONCERNING CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR  
ELECTRICIANS**

The Independent Electrical Contractors of New England (IEC-NE) **strongly supports continuing education for electricians.** Faulty electrical wires and improper grounding of wires have caused fires that have destroyed homes and taken lives. By ensuring that licensed electricians are required to maintain the highest possible level of safety and training, continuing education helps prevent tragedies.

Continuing education also ensures that every license holder is up-to-date with changes in the industry. New technologies are being introduced at a more rapid pace than ever before and changes in building codes are numerous. These technologies are generally safer and more efficient, benefiting Connecticut consumers. Continuing education classes provide a mechanism for electricians to learn from each other and from instructors about new advances in the field.

In addition, continuing education for electricians also promotes workplace safety and health. Under current law, continuing education must include information on construction safety, which is a big step forward for workplace safety and health because safety education and training is the most effective way to reduce loss of life and injuries to workers. Recognizing the importance of continuing education for electricians, of the 37 states that require any type of state level licensing for electricians, only 4 do not require continuing education for electricians.

However, given that the state has lagged far behind in adopting the updating building codes - which we are very concerned about - we agree that more flexibility should be built into the continuing education law. ***We therefore support HB-5021 if amended to provide that electricians are required to take a minimum of 4 hours up to 7 hours, as determined by the Electrical Board.*** The Electrical Board, which is comprised of union and non-union unlimited electrical license holders monitors issues relating to code changes and other changes in the field. This language provides that the board, which is in the best position to determine how many hours of continuing education should be required, has the ability to reduce the number of required hours while ensuring that a minimum of four hour are required to be performed.

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